Answeres to the particulars proponed by his Majesties Commissionar. 15. August 1638.

HAving seriously considered with our selves that nothing in this world is so pretious, and ought to be so deare unto us as our Religion, that the diseases of this Kirk after long toleration did threaten no lesse than her owne ruine, and expiring of the trueth of Religion at last. And that a free generall Assembly was the ordinarie remedie appointed by divine authoritie, and blessed by divine providence in other Kirks, and after a speciall manner in the Kirk of *Scotland*; Wee have often and earnestly supplicated for the same, and have laboured to remove what was objected, or what we could concieve to bee any hinderance to the obtaining of our desire, like as wee have now for the same good end resolved to returne this Answer to the particulars proponed to bee performed by us before an Assembly be indicted.

The particulars proponed are either matters Ecclesiastick or civil: Ecclesiastick or kirk matters are, the First concerning Ministers deposed or suspended by the presbyteries, since the first of Februar last without warrant of the Ordinar, that they bee reponed to their own places. The second concerning Moderators of presbytrys deposed since the forsaid day to be reponed, and all Moderators appointed by the said presbyteries without warrant forsaid to desist from executing the office of Moderator. The third anent Ministers admitted since the day forsaid that they desist frō exercising the function of the Ministerie in that place to which they had beene admitted. These three particulars doe concerne the power, duetie and particular facts or faults of presbyteries where in wee have no power to judge and determine whether they have lawfully proceeded or not, far lesse can wee urge or command them to alter or recall what they have determined or done, in the suspending, deposing or admitting of Ministers or Moderators: they beeing properly subject to the superiour Assemblies of the Kirk, and in this case and condition of the Kirke, to the generall Assembly, where if they shall not after tryall justifie their proceedings from the good warrants of Scripture, reason, and of the acts and practises of the Kirk, they ought sustaine their owne deserved censure. And since upon the one side there be many complaints against the Prelates for their usurpation over Presbyteries in the like particulars: And on the other side there bee such complaints of the doings and disorders of presbyteries to the offence of the Prelats. Wee trust that his Majesti-

es Commissioner will not esteeme this to bee an hinderance of the indiction of a generall Assembly: but rather a powerfull and principall motive with speed to conveen the same, as the proper Iudicatorie for determining such dangerous and universall differences of the Kirke. Neither doe wee heare that any Ministers are deposed, but some only suspended during this *interim*, till a generall Assembly for their erronious doctrine and flagitious life: So that it were most offensive to God, disgracefull to Religion, and scandalous to the people to repone them to their places till they be tried and censured. And concerning Moderators none of them (as we understand) are deposed, but some only changed, which is verie ordinarie in this Kirk.

The fourth, anent the reparing of Parochinars to their own kirks, & that Elders assist their Minister in the discipline of the Kirk, ought to bee cognosced and judged by the particular Presbyterie to which the Parochiners and Elders are subject, since the cause may bee in the Ministers no lesse than the Parochinars and Elders. And incase they find no redresse there, to ascend till they come to a generall Assembly, the want wherof makes disorders to be multiplyed both in presbyteries and paroches.

To the sixth, that Ministers waite upon their owne Kirks, & that none of them come to the assembly or place where the same is keeped: but such as shall bee chosen Commissionars from presbyteries.

Wee answere, that none are to come to the place of the assembly, but such as are either allowed by commission, or other-wise have such *interest* as they can approve to his Majesties Commissionar, and the Assembly conveened.

To the seveuth, anent the appointing of Moderators of presbyteries to be Commissionars to the genertll assembly: only constant Moderatours, who ceased long since, were found in the assembly 1606 (which yet was never reputed by this Kirk to be a lawfull national assembly) to be necessarie members of a generall assembly. And if both the Moderators, who if they bee necessarie members need not to bee chosen, and the chosen Commissionars repare to the assembly: the Assembly it self can judge best of the members where-of it ought to bee constitute.

To the nynth, that no laick whatsoever meddle with the chooising of Commissionars for the presbyteries, aud no Minister without his owne presbyterie: Wee say that according to the order of the Kirk none

none but Miniſters and Elders of Kirks ought to have voice in chooſing Commiſſioners for presbyteries: And that no Miniſter or Elder ought to have voice in election, but in his own presbyterie.

The reſt of the particulars are civill matters, as the fifth, anent the paying of the rents and ſtipends of Biſhops and Miniſters: Concerning which wee can ſay no further, but that the Lawes are patent for them as others his Majeſties ſubjects. And that the generall aſſembly ought not to bee delayed upon any complaint of that kind.

The eight, requiring that Biſhops and other Miniſters may bee ſecured in their perſons: Wee think ſo reaſonable, that we will promiſe everie one of us for our owne parts they ſhall ſuffer no violence from us, and ſhall hinder others ſo far as we may, and if any trouble them otherwiſe, or make them any kind of moleſtation in that attendance, except by order of Law: the parties are juſtly puniſhable according to the degrie of their fault as other ſubjects are.

To the tenth, concerning the diſſolving of all convocations & meetings and the peaceableneſſe of the Countrie: Theſe meetings beeing keeped for no other end, but for conſulting about lawfull remedies againſt ſuch preſſing grievances as threaten the deſolation of this kirk and State, cannot be diſſolved till the evills be removed: And we truſt that nothing in theſe our meetings hath eſcaped us, which carryeth in it the ſmalleſt appearance of undutifullneſſe, or which may ſeeme to tend to the breach of the common peace; But although our adverſaries have heerein calumniated us, yet we have alwayes ſo behaved our ſelves as beſeemed his Majeſties moſt humble and loyall ſubjects petitioning his Majeſtie for a legall redreſſe of our juſt grievances.

To the laſt, concerning the Covenant: The Commiſſioner his G. having many times and moſt inſtantly preſſed us with that point. We did firſt by invincible reaſons make manifeſt that we could not without ſinning againſt God and our conſciences, and without wrong done to this Nationall Kirk, and the poſteritie, reſcind or alter the ſame. And thereafter did at length cleare the ſame of all unlawfull combination againſt authority by our laſt Supplication & declaration which his Majeſties Commiſſionar accepted as the moſt readie and powerfull of all other meanes which could come within the compaſſe of our thoughts to give his Majeſtie ſatisfaction. The ſubſcription of this our Confeſſion of Faith and Covenant, beeing an act ſo evidently tending to the glorie of God, the Kings honor, and happineſſe of of the kingdome.

dome. And having already proven so comfortable to us in the inward of our hearts: It is our ardent and constant desire, and heartie wish that both his Majestie, and all his good Subjects may bee partakers of the same comfort: Like as wee find our selves bound by conscience and by the Covenant it selfe to perswade all his Majesties good Subjects to joyne with us for the good of Religion, his Majesties honour, and the quyetnesse of the Kingdome, which being modestly used by us without pressing or threatning of the meaneſt, wee hope shall never give his Majestie the least cause of discontent.

Seeing therefore according to our power and interest we are most willing to remove all hinderances, that thinges may bee carried in a peaceable manner worthie of our profession and Covenant, doe ayme at nothing but the good of the Kingdome, and preservation of the Kirk, which by consumption and combustion is like to bee desperately diseased, except remedie some way bee speedily provided; and delight to use no other meanes but such as are legall, and have beene ordinarie in this Kirk since the Reformation, We are confident that without further delaye for preventing of greater evills and miseries than wee can expresse Our just desires shall bee granted. So shall we bee incouraged in the peace of our soules still to pray for his Majestie all encrease of true honour and happinesse.

FINIS.

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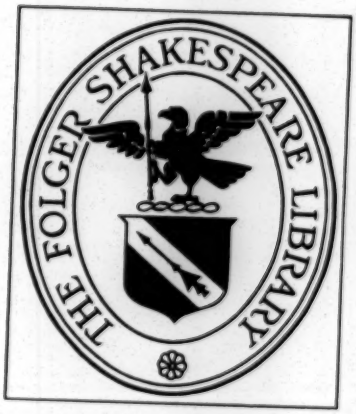
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